

ANALYSIS, LEFT RESULTS, AND WHERE NEXT >>Pages 3,4,5 and 6

●PLUS

# WHY LABOUR LOST

Did press win it for Tories?  
>>Pages 10&11

# Socialist Worker

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## CAMERON GOES ON RAMPAGE AGAINST WORKERS AND POOR

# DEFY TORY RULE



### GREECE

#### Workers move to stop Syriza backsliding

THE GREEK government, led by the radical left Syriza party, is backsliding under pressure from the European Union and International Monetary Fund.

But workers at the formerly state-owned Hellenic Petroleum refinery walked out on Saturday. And the Piraeus dockers struck on Thursday of last week.

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**THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY**

### ANTI-FASCISM

#### Mass rally takes on Nazis in Walthamstow

UP TO 1,000 people rallied in Walthamstow, north east London, against the racist English Defence League (EDL) last Saturday.

Fewer than 100 Nazis joined the EDL national demo. But a massive police operation allowed them to march.

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## THE THINGS THEY SAY

**'She is a little prickly behind closed doors'**

A source on the queen

**'McMafia'**

The cabal running Britain according to the **Daily Mail** because some politicians were born in Scotland

**'It's really put me off going to work'**

Former Poundland worker **Naomi Scott** after bosses imposed a 'bra search'

**'Now looking to the new PM to rediscover his inner husky'**

Friends of the Earth loses the plot a little

**'Snatching catastrophe from the jaws of defeat'**

Labour insider on Scottish leader Labour Jim Murphy

**'Labour has captured a zeitgeist in this campaign'**

Peter Mandelson

**'Lost it so badly, because in 2010 we discarded New Labour'**

Mandelson changes his mind

**'Orgiastic'**

Boris Johnson describes first meeting between Cameron and new MPs



# Government of the rich for the rich backed by Benn?

**TROUBLEMAKER IS** aware readers may be feeling queasy at five more years of government by the Bullingdon club.

That Michael Gove got a promotion is bad enough.

George Osborne remains chancellor, and Theresa May continues as home secretary.

Iain Duncan Smith will stay put as work and pensions secretary. Which is nice for him and dreadful for everybody else.

The department for work and pensions moved to examine cutting a scheme that helps disabled people into work—hours after the Tories won the election.

The Access to Work fund helps people and employers cover costs of disabilities that might be a barrier to work.

Duncan Smith is also set to make swingeing cuts to child

Robert says he is "disappointed" that both Labour and the Liberal Democrats are blocking Conservative measures to hold a public vote and that his party is the only one that can deliver a referendum by winning a full majority at the next election.



Robert Halfon campaigning for an EU referendum with the late Tony Benn MP (above left) and with local residents (above right)

**MAKE ST GEORGE'S DAY A PUBLIC HOLIDAY**

National polls have shown that a majority of people support this proposal. Robert Halfon's election leaflet

benefits and child tax credits and may abolish maternity pay to slice £12 billion from the welfare budget.

Mark Harper is the new chief whip.

He will be able to remind colleagues in trouble of the merits of a quick resignation, as he quit as immigration minister over his cleaner's visa in

"Fighting for England means that we should have a say on our membership of the European Union and if we win the next election, the people of Marlow will have an In/Out referendum on the EU."



February last year. Isabella Acevedo was deported. Harper, who came up with the racist anti-immigrant vans, has been promoted.

Robert Halfon will become deputy leader of the Conservative Party.

His election flyer prominently featured Labour's traditional red colours,

focused on immigration, a British "bill of rights" and making St George's Day a national holiday. He even managed a picture of Tony Benn on the leaflet.

Oliver Letwin has been promoted to full cabinet member and will move from the government's policy unit to the Cabinet Office.

Letwin wrote a book called *Privatising the World*. He described Andrew Lansley's "liberation" of the NHS.

In 2011 he was dumping documents, including the personal information of constituents, into a bin in London's St James' Park.

The bloke in charge of culture, John Whittingdale, is against gay equality but then again so is education secretary Nicky Morgan.

Oh and Boris Johnson is in the cabinet.

**A ZOO in Japan** was in trouble last week after calling a baby monkey Charlotte.

The name was chosen by public vote. The zoo had to apologise after others complained it was disrespectful because the latest royal scrounger in Britain is called Charlotte too.

But it is only "reconsidering" renaming the animal.



Link to scrounger insults monkey

**POLICE IN Derbyshire** spent 45 minutes questioning a four year old, a six year old and their mother last week because the children were playing outside.

Mother Andree said, "We've always told them to respect the police, and that the police catch baddies, so they were pretty confused."

## Pope might forgive the 'sin of abortion'

THE POPE has graciously ordered that women who have had abortions can be pardoned by priests from next year.

This means women can seek forgiveness from the church for having the audacity to control their own bodies.

Doctors who perform the procedures will also be able to ask for absolution.

Apparently the pope has decided that 2016 will be a Holy Year of Mercy.

But in case you were

getting too relaxed cardinal Velasco De Paolis stressed, "This does not cancel the sin of abortion."

**EX-MINISTER Eric Pickles** has bagged himself a host of jobs, among them anti-corruption tsar.



Down with that sort of thing

The same Eric Pickles closed down the main public sector anti-corruption unit. One of the new Counter Fraud Centre's wheezes is a "global risk register" in partnership with arms firm BAE Systems.

## Does 'axis of evil' now include Texas?

A NEW US war was closely averted last week—for now.

A leaked map of military exercises for 1,200 US special forces troops showed Texas marked as "hostile territory".

Panic ensued. Some claimed the exercise was a secret plot for Washington to invade Texas.

Governor Greg Abbott said it was important that Texans "know their safety,

constitutional rights, property rights and civil liberties will not be infringed".

Defence sources said the map referred to role play.

But Texas senator and Republican presidential candidate

Ted Cruz said many people don't believe a government that has been "disrespecting the liberties of citizens".



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## Tobacco tackles Islam

THE TOBACCO industry has been waging a sort of religious war for decades.

The companies' tactics have included portraying religious objections to tobacco as a form of extremism, analysis of years of industry documents reveals.

"The industry has sought to distort and misinterpret the cultural beliefs and to reinterpret them to serve the industry's interests," said Kelley Lee, one of the authors of the study. "All to sell a product that kills half of its customers."

A 1996 British American Tobacco (BAT) document, for instance, described the "Islamic threat," including rising fundamentalism, as a "real danger" to the industry. "This amounts to us having to prepare to fight a hurricane," the memo warns.

# 1,667

the number of votes the Nazi BNP got in the election—99.7 percent fewer than in 2010

**GOING DOWN**



## Cameron goes gardening

DAVID CAMERON may have been hankering after a spot of gardening leave after the election.

He applied to the local council for permission to enlarge the garden of his constituency home in leafy Chipping Norton.

He used part of the £300,000 he inherited from his dad to buy the land—previously designated for agricultural use—from his neighbour, the Tory donor Lord Chadlington.

**GEORGE Osborne** will begin his second term as chancellor without his chief of staff, Rupert Harrison, who is leaving government.

The former Eton head boy left to take a job in the city. Which is only fair since he did so much for them.



# Don't let Tory victory stop you fighting back



## Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

**T**HE GENERAL election result was a bitter blow. The rich cheered and the jubilant Tories are gearing up fast for a new class war. They want to drive through the worst of the cuts straight away, hoping voters will forget the pain by the 2020 election.

Millions of people disgusted at five years of Tory austerity and racist scapegoating are asking, "How could they have won?"

Media commentators claim the vote expresses people's inherent selfishness, or that it shows that the working class is no longer a progressive force.

The defeat has thrown the Labour Party into turmoil. It would have lost even if it held Scotland (see page 5), though its losses there were historic.

### Joke

It's a sick joke for Tony Blair and his cronies to argue that this happened because Ed Miliband was too left wing.

Labour under Miliband aped Tory arguments that said austerity is necessary and politicians must crack down on immigration.

It should be no surprise that some people ended up voting for the real thing.

Pandering to racism has also led to growing confidence of the



AROUND 2,000 people demonstrated against Tory austerity in central London last Saturday (see page 7)

PICTURE: PA

racist Ukip party, which in turn is dragging the mainstream even further to the right. Anti-racists will still have to be ready to mobilise against racism and Islamophobia wherever it appears.

But there is also a danger that the

endless arguments that Labour needs to shift even further to the right will lead to people sowing illusions in any candidate who stands against a Blairite.

Remember that Ed Miliband was painted as a turn away from Blairism. He was the favoured candidate of the trade union leaders, who must also carry some responsibility for Labour's defeat.

Union leaders have squandered several massive opportunities during the last five years to deal the Tories a body blow.

After the mass strike of 2.6 million public sector workers over pension rights in November 2011 the majority of

union leaders staged a wholesale retreat within days.

Struggles generate confidence and unity, yet time and again this has been thrown away.

It's not good enough for union leaders to say workers should hold back so they don't jeopardise Labour's chances. Holding back has undermined workers' belief that austerity can be stopped—and still Labour lost.

Where do we go from here?

### Waiting

Simply waiting another five years to try and get a Labour victory in 2020 is not an option.

Miliband failed, but the Labour leadership also betrayed its supporters under Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. There is no sign that a new leader is going to change course.

All mainstream parties have failed the working class. The Scottish National Party's success was in part because it was able to pose as an opponent of austerity.

The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) has fought to build a left electoral alternative to Labour. Despite some excellent

campaigns it was unable to make electoral breakthroughs.

But socialists have to challenge the pessimism of those who argue that the working class can no longer fight. When given a lead and a serious campaign workers have shown they will resist.

The Marxism 2015 event (see page 16) will be the place to thrash out debates about class, nationalism and the role of Labour.

But we also have to use every opportunity to build resistance and solidarity with all groups of workers who struggle.

The People's Assembly demonstration on 20 June is a chance for everyone appalled by the prospect of five more Tory years to get out onto the streets.

While being honest about our weaknesses, socialists have to see that our enemy is not all powerful.

The Tories' majority is narrow and the economy is shaky.

Cameron has to push through a referendum on the European Union, which divides his side.

The next few years may not be plain sailing for the Tories. They want a class war—let's give it to them.



Refuse strikers in Barking and Dagenham, east London, are getting solidarity from other workers (page 19)





# Smug Tories sharpen the knives for a new assault

David Cameron has put together a class war cabinet—and vicious plans that must be fought, says **Judith Orr**

**THE TORIES** wasted no time in gearing up for new attacks on the working class after their shock general election victory last week.

Speaking outside 10 Downing Street with a sickeningly smug face, David Cameron claimed we were all “one nation” and the new all-Tory government would be “fair”.

But he was already preparing to launch class war on millions of ordinary people.

Within hours Tory MPs were laying out plans for the devastating new round of cuts they want to rush through in the next three years.

The head of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, Paul Johnson, has said Tory plans could mean cuts of more than 5 percent in 2016-17 and in 2017-18.

This would be “twice the size of any year’s cuts” during Cameron’s first term.

The hated Iain Duncan Smith has been dragged out of the shadows where he was kept hidden during the election campaign. He is back as work and pensions secretary, ready to unleash £12 billion worth of cuts to welfare spending.

This is the man who said it was “ridiculous” to blame the government for the fact that almost a million people in Britain are forced to resort to food banks to feed

## BACK STORY

**Despite polls forecasting a hung parliament, the Tories won a majority in the general election**

- A number of Liberal Democrat ministers and Tory Esther McVey lost their seats
- So did shadow chancellor Ed Balls and 40 Scottish Labour MPs
- The Scottish National Party took 56 of Scotland’s 59 seats
- Racist Ukip is down to one MP
- Caroline Lucas is still the Green Party’s only MP. Respect’s George Galloway lost his seat to Labour

themselves. He wants to limit child benefit to the first two children, despite Cameron’s denials. This would affect a million families.

He also wants to lower the benefit cap, which has already pushed people into poverty, from £26,000 to £23,000 a year.

Cameron’s favourite and the architect of austerity, George Osborne, remains chancellor—and has been rewarded with a promotion to first secretary of state.

As Socialist Worker went to press Osborne was talking about calling an emergency budget to announce the next austerity attacks.

**DAVID CAMERON and his wife Samantha on their way to cast their votes in Oxfordshire**

Former education secretary Michael Gove returned to the cabinet less than a year after Cameron demoted him to defuse teachers’ fury. He is now justice secretary with a mission to repeal the Human Rights Act.

## Staggering

The Tories are looking to cut a staggering £30 billion worth of public spending. But during the election campaign they refused to give details.

Now they have to admit just how hard they are going to hit some of the most vulnerable people in

society.

Documents leaked days before the election revealed some of the proposals the Department for Work and Pensions was considering.

These include abolishing statutory maternity pay, stopping young people under 25 claiming incapacity or housing benefit, and taking carers’ allowance away from 40 percent of those who claim it.

The next five years are not just about austerity.

The Tories want to attack the rights of migrants, abolish life-long council tenancies and limit trade union rights. Theresa May is

defying requests to allow refugees into Britain.

They plan to ban strikes if they aren’t backed by 40 percent of those entitled to vote, denying workers’ the right to take action on a simple majority.

Yet they received only 37 percent of votes cast in the general election themselves. The Tories can’t count on the support of most people.

They only won because Labour failed to pose a serious alternative.

And while they are delighted to be free from the need to form a coalition with the Lib Dems, this also leaves them with a much thinner

## Surrender to austerity costs Clegg and Miliband their jobs

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WHILE THE Tories are driving through their plans for their first 100 days, the Labour Party is in disarray. Ed Miliband resigned as Labour leader within hours of the final election results.

The battle for a new leader began with various Blairite figures touring the television studios on the Sunday after the election denouncing the

Miliband campaign. They declared it too left wing and more concerned with zero hours workers than “aspiring” middle class voters.

This view is an excuse to drive the Labour Party even further to the right to chase votes from Ukip and the Tories.

But workers who



Red Ed's red mug

looked to Labour in vain to oppose the Tories’ attacks know that painting Miliband as a left wing firebrand is rewriting history.

Miliband tied Labour to austerity, declared that it had to be tougher on immigration and blocked with the Tories to defend the Union against Scottish independence.

Pushing the agenda even further to the right will only ensure Labour will not offer any sort of alternative to the Tories.

Liberal Democrat leader Nick Clegg also resigned after a catastrophic election. The Lib Dems are down to only eight MPs from 56.

Voters did not forgive them for keeping a vicious

Tory government in office. They have been reduced from a party in government to no more than a footnote to the national political picture.

To add insult to injury the Scottish National Party, as the new third party in Westminster, is demanding its right to occupy the large suite of offices traditionally used by the Lib Dems.

# No mandate for cuts in Scotland

by RAYMIE KIERNAN in Scotland

HUNDREDS OF thousands of voters in Scotland last week took their revenge on the Labour Party for years of betrayals and its alliance with the Tories in September's independence referendum.

The Scottish National Party (SNP) took 56 out of the 59 Westminster seats in Scotland—up from just six in 2010. Nearly half of its MPs now have majorities of more than 10,000. It was Scottish Labour's worst electoral defeat since 1918. Half a century of electoral dominance has been turned on its head.

Labour's Blairite leader in Scotland, Jim Murphy, has faced several calls to resign from senior trade union and party figures.

The SNP took half of all votes cast—almost 1.5 million. That's one million more than 2010, half of which came from Labour and the Lib Dems.

But it was a bittersweet result as people still ended up with a Tory government.

Bob Thomson, a Labour Party member for over 50 years, told Socialist Worker, "We thought we'd see SNP MPs giving some steel to a minority Labour government."

"But we're going to see a lot of anti-working class legislation now. That's the trajectory the Tories are on."

But the Tories have no mandate to govern in Scotland. They got 14.9 percent of the vote, and one MP—a new record low for a Westminster election.

There are now huge expectations on the SNP to deliver its central campaign message to "end austerity".

But it is not going to follow

through. The SNP will be a tiny minority in a parliament controlled by a Tory majority.

And its record in councils and the Scottish government has shown it is more than willing to make cuts. This is not lost on people and many are looking to see what the left do.

## Cancelling

Outside one Dundee polling station an active SNP member of just eight months told Socialist Worker, "I'll be cancelling my subscription tomorrow—that's the job done."

The SNP became a vehicle for those who want to continue the fight for independence and a more socially just society. And for those whose main desire was to punish Labour, the SNP seemed like the only show in town.

Some in Labour argue that what is happening in Scotland is just a wave of nationalism. But this fails to understand the shift

in the political landscape—and the potential for the left to grow.

Sharon Anderson is a left pro-independence activist in Lanarkshire. She was a SNP member in the 1980s but isn't now, although she voted for it last week and is hopeful it will stick to its promises.

She told Socialist Worker that Labour couldn't blame the SNP for its defeat. "It was the Labour Party that crushed the Labour Party," she said.

"And if they don't stop blaming Scots for their failure they will lose their MSPs as well."

Although Sharon wants to see Labour punished in the 2016 Scottish elections too she is also "looking for a left party to vote for" in the seats elected on proportional representation.

Bob agreed, "The SNP is just as neoliberal as Labour was." He thinks the left needs to get its act together and be "snapping at their heels".

Scottish National Party leader Nicola Sturgeon had reason to celebrate

## Successful battles can boost left

"I'D HATE to see the general election result mirrored next year," Jordan Daly told Socialist Worker. He is a Glasgow student and an executive member of left wing independence campaign Hope Over Fear.

Jordan left the SNP last weekend. He said, "A lot of people clung to the SNP because there was nothing else there but it is not the working class party people think."

He added, "We need to hold it to account and build a genuine left anti-austerity movement. Anyone with a sensible head on them wants the whole left to get together."

"There will be people in Labour who are wondering where they now go. We need to create a new home for them and those who don't think the SNP is good enough."

With the Tories set to renew their assault on the working class resistance is crucial.

Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) candidate for Glasgow North Angela McCormick said, "The success of the left in 2016 and beyond will be measured by how we strengthen resistance to the cuts. We must work to offer a united electoral challenge next year and also understand the frontline is opposing Tory austerity in the here and now—successful battles against austerity will boost the left."

majority in parliament. The Tory right will get its referendum on the European Union that could seriously divide the party.

The Tories' proposals will fill millions with horror. The question is whether this can be turned into anger—and a willingness to fight.

Cameron hopes the working class will be crushed by his victory. We have to use every opportunity to prove him wrong.

## On other pages...

TUSC has built networks to take on austerity >>Page 6

## FIGURE IT OUT

**32%** of the new batch of MPs were privately educated

**48%** of Tory MPs went to private school

**10%** of MPs went to Eton College

**7%** of the general population had a private education

SOURCE: THE SUTTON TRUST

by SADIE ROBINSON

LEADER OF the racist Ukip party Nigel Farage failed in his attempt to be elected MP in South Thanet.

Farage resigned—but Ukip refused to accept his resignation.

In a statement the party said there was "overwhelming evidence" members didn't want him to go. "He has therefore been persuaded to withdraw his resignation and remains leader of Ukip."

Farage's election failure follows months of campaigning by anti-racists in the Stand Up to Ukip (Sutu) campaign.

Jo Cardwell from Sutu told Socialist Worker,

"Farage came to South Thanet with the intention of dividing people—but they rejected that."

"The high turnout shows that people came out to vote against him."

The party now has just one MP, Douglas Carswell in Clacton, after Mark Reckless lost in Rochester and Strood.

## Rise

But behind the lack of MPs is a worrying rise in the Ukip vote.

Farage grabbed 32 percent of the vote in South Thanet, behind the Tories' 38 percent. The Ukip vote there rose by 27 percent. Nationally the party took around 13 percent of the vote—or

3.8 million votes.

It made Thanet its first district council, going from two seats there to 33.

And nationally Ukip gained 200 seats in the council



For once Ukip leader Nigel Farage had no smiles for the cameras at the count in South Thanet

elections—175 more than it had before.

In many areas where Ukip didn't win, it saw its vote rise.

As Jo pointed out, "Ukip came second in 118 places in the parliamentary elections."

Ukip is now effectively Britain's third biggest party.

"Its rising vote is massively worrying and shows how important it is to stand up against Ukip."

## Drive

"But South Thanet shows that it is possible to drive Ukip back."

Ukip benefited from the mainstream parties' agreement that immigration is a problem.

Their racist

scapegoating made Farage and Ukip seem less extreme and more credible.

Farage may have lost in South Thanet but Ukip has succeeded in pulling the debate over immigration yet further to the right.

Anti-racists will need to keep organising.

Sutu activists in Ramsgate were set to meet on Wednesday of this week to plan their next steps.

Sutu also plans to hold a national activists' meeting in the next few weeks to plan future campaigning against the racist party.

## More online...

Get involved in Stand Up to Ukip activities >>standuptoukip.org





## ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



## Britain's two party system still in crisis

**MILIBAND WOULD** have understood the catastrophe that engulfed the Labour Party on Thursday of last week. Not the wretched Ed, but his Marxist theorist father Ralph.

In his classic critique of Labourism, Parliamentary Socialism, the elder Miliband described “the Labour leaders” as “bourgeois politicians with, at best, a certain bias towards social reform”. He documented their craven loyalty to the British imperialist state.

It was this loyalty, not Ed Miliband's inability to eat a bacon sandwich or timid criticisms of Tony Blair, that did it for the Labour campaign in the general election. This was a defeat made in Scotland.

Miliband committed the catastrophic error of campaigning against Scottish independence in last September's referendum as part of a Unionist coalition with the Tories. This allowed the Scottish National Party (SNP) effectively to destroy Scottish Labour last week, sweeping away the patient efforts of generations of working class militants.

Miliband then found himself caught in a vice during the election campaign.

Shortly before the election, the academic Tim Bale accused SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon of, “with supreme sleight of hand and breathtaking chutzpah” entering “into an unspoken alliance with the Conservatives—one that massively overstates her likely influence over a putative Labour minority government.”

This is in the hope that, by helping David Cameron to secure a second term, an SNP victory in 2016 and a second independence referendum will become more likely.

Alliance or no, Cameron certainly ruthlessly played the Scottish card, to rally small-c conservative English voters to stop a fictional Labour-SNP coalition.

In the process, as another academic, Patrick Dunleavy, tweeted on election night, “Tories have eaten Lib Dems”, taking seat after seat away from their hapless coalition partners.

### Onslaught

Faced with this onslaught, Miliband junior could offer no positive reason for voting Labour. Fatally, he had no coherent answer to the Tory accusation that the last Labour government caused the economic crisis.

Instead of addressing the pull of anti-migrant racism among some ex-Labour voters he pandered to it. I suspect that we'll discover that, where the Labour vote rose—in London for instance—this was motivated by visceral hatred and fear of the Tories.

But the two-party system is still broken. The Conservative and Labour shares of the vote barely moved compared to 2010. In terms of votes, if not seats, Ukip have supplanted the Lib Dems as the third party.

And the SNP now has a solid phalanx of 56 anti-Unionist MPs in the House of Commons.

As for David Cameron, Andrew Rawnsley pointed out in the Observer newspaper that “this result may have given the Tories more seats, but at the same time it has left the prime minister much weaker in parliament. He has a wafer-thin majority and no Lib Dem buffer between him and his backbench irreconcilables. He may come to look back on his days with Nick Clegg as bliss.”

More than that, the means Cameron used to win will quickly return to haunt him. To appease his right wing and hold Ukip at bay, he has committed himself to an in-out referendum on British membership of the European Union (EU). Like his crony George Osborne and the bulk of big business, he doesn't want “Brexit”, a British exit from the EU.

But how will he get EU leaders to give him a deal that allows him to campaign for a yes vote—and stop the Tories splitting in the process? And, after weeks of demonising the SNP, how can Cameron keep a Scotland that gave them a landslide victory inside the Union?

After his re-election he promised a return to “One Nation” Conservatism. But is that nation more than England?

Cameron and his advisers are skilled tacticians. But their cunning plans have bought the first Tory majority in the House of Commons since the 1990s at the price of precipitating a real crisis of the British state.

That crisis will dominate and probably wreck the rest of Cameron's premiership.



TUSC CANDIDATES on the 21 March Stand Up to Racism demonstration in London

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

# TUSC campaigns have built networks to take on austerity

by NICK CLARK

### THE TRADE Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) stood parliamentary candidates across Britain.

The results were uneven. In some areas TUSC candidates received small but encouraging votes.

In Tottenham, north London, Jenny Sutton increased her share of the vote to 3.1 percent from 2.6 percent in 2010.

TUSC chair Dave Nellist, standing in Coventry North West, increased his share of the vote to 3.9 from the 3.7 percent he got when he stood in Coventry North East in 2010.

### Challenge

In Barnsley Central, TUSC candidate Dave Gibson won 1.6 percent with 573 votes.

And in Doncaster Central, where there hasn't been a left challenge since 2001, first-time candidate Mev Akram won 1 percent.

In other seats candidates improved on previous left results but remained below 1 percent.

Portsmouth North TUSC candidate Jon Woods also increased his share of the from 2010 despite an overall swing from Labour to the Tories.

He told Socialist Worker, “The overall swing to the Tories and Ukip in England was clearly evident in

Portsmouth. That TUSC modestly increased its vote was down to the hard work of everyone who campaigned.

“The response we got was positive, but often people would say they agreed with TUSC but would vote Labour to try to get rid of the Tory MP.

“We are still in the early stages of building a left challenge to Labour. To increase the vote for TUSC among a big swing to the right is a real achievement.”

In some areas the results were more disappointing—particularly where the share



Jenny Sutton

of the left vote fell.

Other left candidates also suffered setbacks.

Bradford West Respect MP George Galloway lost his seat to Labour. He had won it from Labour in a landslide by-election victory in a 2012.

### Against

But TUSC activists used the campaigns to build the fight against austerity after the election.

Jenny told Socialist Worker, “The point was to build a network of activists on the ground—that's exactly what we've done in Tottenham.

“Even though our support wasn't reflected in the vote we were very successful in getting out the message that austerity is a con in the interests of the rich.

“Things don't change in parliament unless there's a movement on the streets—that's the next step.”

The task now is to build on the networks established through the campaigning. The result of the election shows the need to fight for a more united left wing alternative.

Jenny said, “We're going to follow up our campaign with a public meeting on housing and regeneration—and we'll be having regular meetings around the cuts.

“One thing is clear is—we can't wait for Labour. There's no option but to fight.”

tusc.org.uk

## Local election results

**TUSC ALSO** stood candidates in the local elections.

In Coventry, TUSC candidates received 4,389 votes. Meanwhile in Leicester they won 4,440—although rebel councillors Wayne Naylor and Barbara Potter did not manage to hold their seats.

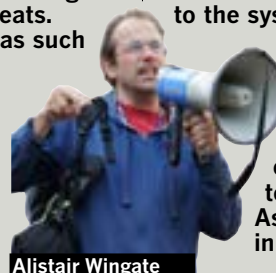
In other areas such as Doncaster, Liverpool and Southampton TUSC won more than 3,000 votes.

Alistair Wingate

won 312 votes in Lozells ward in Birmingham.

He told Socialist Worker, “When people asked how we differed to the mainstream, I told them our politics is about resistance. They were open to the idea that there should be some sort of challenge to the system.”

He added, “We'll now try and get some of those people on the coach to the People's Assembly demo in June.”



Alistair Wingate



# Anti-Tory protests show anger at austerity

Marchers reject cuts and racism—and want real resistance to the government, says **Lewis Nielsen**

**AROUND 2,000 people marched on Downing Street last Saturday, two days after the election, to vent their anger at the Tories.**

Demonstrators were furious at the Tories' plans to ram through further austerity.

The demonstration was young, lively and made up of many who were demonstrating for the first time. It suggests that there is a real desire to build resistance to Tory cuts.

Students with homemade placards reading "Don't cut my future" marched in protest over impending Tory cuts to education.

Garth was part of a group of students who travelled from Sussex University to join the protest.

He told Socialist Worker, "We're marching here today to let the Tories know that from day one we will resist their cuts and attacks on ordinary people."

"We have to show Cameron and his cabinet of millionaires that we won't take their cuts lying down. Our futures are at stake."

Other protesters held placards that read "No to Racism" in response to rising Islamophobia and the racist scapegoating of migrants.

## Mood

London Black Revs called the protest on Facebook only a couple of days earlier. The turnout shows the mood to build a fightback against austerity.

The protest marched through central London, stopping off at Tory election campaign headquarters to chant "Tories out". Marchers staged sit-down protests at Whitehall and Westminster Bridge.

The police were very heavy handed. Cops kettled around 150 protesters towards the end of the march.

They arrested 15 people, including a 16 year old boy.

Many on the march stressed the need to plan the next steps in taking on the Tories.

Harry from south London was on his first demonstration. He told

## BACK STORY

**Protests against Tory austerity took place two days after last week's general election**

● Around 2,000 marched in London and 300 in Cardiff

● Marchers were furious at cuts to key services and also opposed racist scapegoating

● The protests showed the potential to build resistance to the Tories

● Activists are now gearing up for a People's Assembly demonstration on 20 June

Socialist Worker, "It's fantastic to see people taking to the streets to reject the destruction the Tories want to wage."

"However, if we're going to build a movement that can beat austerity, we need to make links with the workplaces that will be affected by cuts and privatisation."

Meanwhile around 300 anti-austerity activists rallied in Cardiff to launch a fightback against the Tories.

Cardiff People's Assembly called the demo at short notice after the general election result.

Trade unionists, peace activists, anti bedroom tax campaigners and others gave a rallying cry for a united movement to stop the Tories' attacks.

Singer Charlotte Church told the rally that the government "is only interested in cosying up to big business".

The People's Assembly will hold its No More Austerity demonstration in London on 20 June.

This is a key date for those who want to build on this anger and strengthen the fight against the government.

**Thanks to Marianne Owens**



## On other pages...

Citizen Shame—the media and the election >>Pages 10&11



**PART OF the 1,000-strong protest against the English Defence League in Walthamstow**

PICTURES: GUY SMALLMAN

## Mass anti-racist rally in Walthamstow takes on the English Defence League

by **KEN OLENDE**

UP TO 1,000 people rallied in Walthamstow, north east London, against the racist English Defence League (EDL) last Saturday.

Unite Against Fascism called the protest with We Are Waltham Forest to oppose an EDL demonstration.

Mohammed, who works at Newham Sixth Form College, told Socialist Worker, "I'm a Muslim. The EDL lies about us and attacks us."

"But I live in Waltham Forest. This is my turf and everyone round here has to challenge them."

Marchers also took on anti-migrant racism.

Sam Strudwick, a Unison union rep at the local Whipps Cross hospital, told the rally, "Immigrants built the NHS and keep it going."

Affifa came to the protest with two friends. She said, "The EDL targets Muslims, so it is nice for us to see so many people who aren't Muslims here supporting us."

"The protest was announced in the mosques on Friday and Muslims care. But many are scared to come."



**The protest**

The EDL protest was a national mobilisation but put less than 100 Nazis on the street. Yet a massive police operation, including hundreds of officers, horses and dogs, allowed them to march.

Local vicar Steven Saxby spoke to the crowd at the end of the protest.

"Today I have been pushed and threatened with arrest on three occasions in my own neighbourhood," he said. "If the EDL comes back we must march."

Police had tried to change the assembly point for the anti-racist protest and constantly harassed demonstrators.

Anti-fascists harangued EDL supporters as they marched under heavy police guard down Blackhorse Road.

Local residents came out of their houses shouting, "We don't want you here—get out of Walthamstow".

Around 60 people repeatedly tried to obstruct the route of the march, slowing it down.

When police had penned the EDL near the town hall protesters continued to shout abuse. People from nearby flats stayed to shout at the Nazis.

Irfan Aktar of Waltham Forest Muslim Association told the rally, "The council said they don't want confrontation."

"But I'm glad to see some councillors here."

Walthamstow resident Jo Cardwell of Stand Up to Ukip told the crowd, "The only good thing in the election was that Nigel Farage was not elected."

"But the rise of the far right is because of the scapegoating of immigrants."

The EDL has threatened to hold several protests in the coming months. For details of counter-protests go to [uaf.org.uk](http://uaf.org.uk)



# Workers move to stop Greece's Syriza government backsliding

by PANOS GARGANAS

**THE GREEK government, led by the radical left Syriza party, is backsliding under pressure from the European Union (EU) and International Monetary Fund (IMF). But workers are not taking this lying down.**

The government was in talks with EU finance ministers on Monday of last week, and had to pay £544 million in debt repayments to the IMF on Tuesday.

The EU and IMF are pushing Greece closer to bankruptcy by withholding £5.2 billion of bailout funds in order to force through "reforms".

Syriza has gone back on its "red line" that there would be no cuts to pensions. It is postponing the promise not to tax the first £8,700 of workers' wages.

It has also agreed to privatise one of Europe's largest ports in Piraeus, near Athens, and now the EU wants it to privatise energy too.

But workers at the formerly state-owned Hellenic Petroleum refinery have seen what privatisation means. An explosion there severely injured six workers on Friday of last week. On Saturday the whole refinery went on strike.

And the Piraeus dockers struck on Thursday of last week (see box).

Sacked workers marched into the offices of state broadcaster ERT in Athens on Monday of this week.

## Implement

Government legislation passed to get their jobs back will take time to implement. Workers were told they would return piecemeal, in alphabetical order.

So the union decided to implement the legislation itself. Workers also demand the service is fully reinstated. And they are defending their union after harsh criticisms from leading Syriza MPs.

Hospital unions have called a national strike for Wednesday of

## BACK STORY

**Workers in Greece are taking action to defend conditions**

- Piraeus dockers struck on Thursday of last week
- Hellenic Petroleum refinery workers struck last Saturday
- Sacked workers at state broadcaster ERT marched back into their offices on Monday
- Health unions have called a strike next week

next week. Their call for money to address understaffing clashes with the EU's demand for cuts.

The government is asking every public sector body to put their money in the Bank of Greece so it can be used for debt repayments. And when they are out of money unpaid wages are the result.

## Join

Syriza isn't only backsliding on austerity. It is sending fighter planes for exercises with Egypt's counter-revolutionary president Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

And foreign minister Nikos Kotzias invited MPs from the fascist Golden Dawn to a defence select committee—even as they stand trial for their party's violent attacks.

But there is too much opposition for the government to sign up to a deal that continues austerity.

The last government did, and the result was its collapse.

Prime minister Alexis Tsipras has said he could put a deal to a referendum. But polls suggest that to win it he would have to use the votes of right wingers to defeat opposition from Syriza members.

So it's not just a question of the government cutting a deal with the EU. The final word will be what people say with their fightback.

**Panos Garganas** is editor of Workers Solidarity, Socialist Worker's sister paper in Greece



**DOCKERS WALKED** out at the port of Piraeus on Thursday of last week

PICTURE: WORKERS SOLIDARITY

## PAKISTAN

# Meeting defies state to expose horror of 'disappearances' in Balochistan

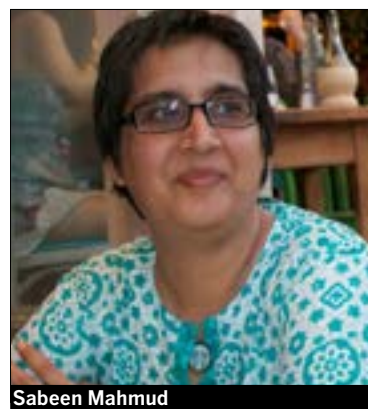
**TEACHERS AT Karachi University** defied a ban and repression to go ahead with a meeting on Unsilencing Balochistan on Wednesday of last week.

Many hundreds attended to discuss "disappearances" in the province of Balochistan, despite an operation by university security staff to prevent people from coming onto campus.

Since 2004 thousands of Baloch, mainly young men, have been "disappeared" only to be found later, tortured and killed with their mutilated bodies thrown onto a road.

The event had first been planned at Lahore University of Management Sciences in early April. But it was cancelled after "orders from the government" almost certainly delivered by the ISI, Pakistan's military intelligence.

Two weeks later human rights activist Sabeen Mahmud, director of The Second Floor (T2F) arts centre in Karachi, agreed that



**Sabeen Mahmud**

it would host a meeting on the same subject. But she was shot dead as she drove home from that organising meeting on 24 April.

So it was no small thing for Teachers against War and Oppression to organise to hold the event.

Organiser Riaz Ahmed said, "We are taking Sabeen's vision forward. She gave up her life for unsilencing

the voice of Baloch missing persons."

It was addressed by Mama Abdul Qadeer and Farzana Majeed Baloch of Voice for Baloch Missing Persons'.

They became widely known for walking across Pakistan in 2013 to highlight the disappeared. Qadeer's son is one of those missing.

There has been an insurgency in Balochistan since the Pakistani government occupied it a year after gaining its own independence from the British empire in 1948.

This terror is growing as security in the area has become a priority for the Pakistan government.

It plans to create a giant new "economic corridor" across Balochistan to the new port at Gwadar—with multi-billion dollar transport, energy and telecoms projects financed by China.

The seminar was organised to show that academic freedom cannot be suppressed.

**Geoff Brown**

## 'We get huge solidarity'

**Nikos Georgiou, president of the dockers' union at Piraeus port, spoke to Socialist Worker**

**WE ARE striking to stop the government privatising the ports.**

**They should be in public control, but they are being given to monopoly capitalists.**

**Bosses used employment agencies to get in unskilled workers on low wages with no union rights. But we struck together, in the public and private sectors, to win them**

**union recognition.**

**We are fighting this in court, and building strikes, protests and information campaigns.**

**We get huge solidarity from ordinary people.**

**If a government that calls itself left continues neoliberal policies then we will resist it.**

**This crisis is a product of the capitalist system. Rather than sell off the ports, we should turn our fire on that system.**

Send messages of support to dockers@otenet.gr

Translated by Despina Karayianni



The election showed that Britain’s ‘free press’ is a farce, but do the papers really control their readers’ minds? Nick Clark looks at the influence and limits of the media

**T**HE mainstream media seems to wield huge influence over the outcome of elections. Some sections of the media certainly went into overdrive in campaigning for a Tory victory.

Indeed, the Guardian newspaper has pointed out that the Tory-supporting Sun newspaper ran more articles attacking ex Labour leader Ed Miliband than it did attacking then leader Neil Kinnock in 1992.

Then, after a shock Tory victory in 1992, the paper’s front page claimed, “It’s the Sun wot won it”.

It seems the Sun has won it again.

But is media support really the decisive factor in any election?

A relatively small minority of rich people own the mainstream newspapers and broadcasters. They’re part of the minority at the top of society that owns and controls the big businesses, banks and the state.

Their position in society is based on exploiting workers. They clearly have an interest in convincing the rest of us that this setup is natural—and they will use their control of the media to do so.

But they will also use that power to try and secure governments they think will best act in their interests.

Rupert Murdoch is an obvious example.

Murdoch has switched allegiance between the Tories and Labour a number of times since he bought the Sun in 1969.

So the Sun was sycophantic in its support for Margaret Thatcher, because Murdoch saw working class militancy and trade unions threatening his interests.

But in 1997 he switched allegiance to Tony Blair’s New Labour. It promised to be much friendlier than the Tories’ Michael Howard, who was threatening to pass a law banning foreign nationals from owning newspapers. Now the Murdoch press supports the Tories again—at least in England and Wales.

### Begging

Labour supporters point out that this is because Ed Miliband threatened to break up the Murdoch empire.

But it’s also because—despite Labour’s surrender to austerity—anything other than a Tory victory would indicate a mood in society that’s opposed to Murdoch’s interests.

This is why many other newspapers also campaigned for a Tory win.

On the day of the election, the traditionally Tory-supporting Telegraph newspaper emailed every address on its marketing database begging its readers to vote Conservative.

And in an editorial on Tuesday

of last week, the London Evening Standard newspaper urged its readers to vote Tory “for London”. It’s owned by the multi-millionaire Russian oligarch Alexander Lebedev.

The thrust of their arguments was that a Tory government would be better for businesses and therefore for everybody else.

The underlying message was clear—what is good for those at the top of society is good for those at the bottom.

Of course, not every newspaper backed the Tories. The Daily Mirror and the Guardian both came out for Labour.

But these differences only reflect divisions inside the ruling class.

So the Telegraph’s plea for a Tory vote argued for a continuation of what it called the “open, enterprised economic approach that has underpinned our prosperity for nearly 40 years”.

Meanwhile, the Guardian believed a Labour victory would mean a society closer to its Keynesian ideal of “economic efficiency, social justice and individual liberty.”

**T**HE difference between the two newspapers reflects two competing visions for how best to run capitalism.

But both agree that capitalism is the only way to run society, and so reflect and promote some of its dominant ideas.

Take the Scottish independence referendum last year. At the heart of the Yes campaign was a mass movement involving tens of thousands of working class people who saw the prospect for real change.

Yet the media presented the referendum as if it was simply a clash between different political parties. On one side, the Scottish National Party (SNP), and on the other the Tories, Labour and the Lib Dems.

The thousands of people who filled Glasgow’s George Square were given, at best, a supporting role in the media’s narrative.

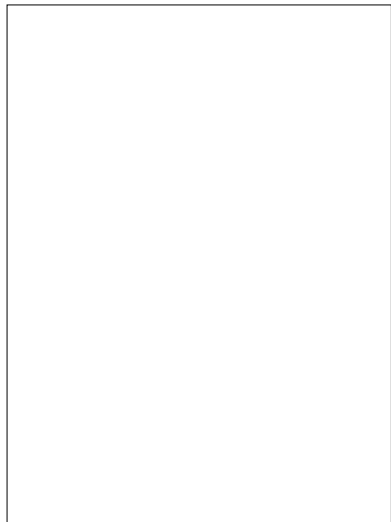
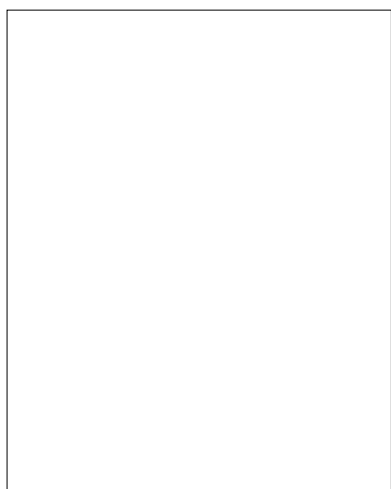
This is because the dominant ruling class idea is that change comes from above, through parliament, rather than from below.

The flipside of this is that anyone who dares to suggest that real change comes from outside parliament is either marginalised, ridiculed or demonised.

The media’s reaction to Russell Brand’s call for revolution is a case in point.

At best he’s presented as simply naive or misguided or at worst as hypocritical, egotistical and dangerous.

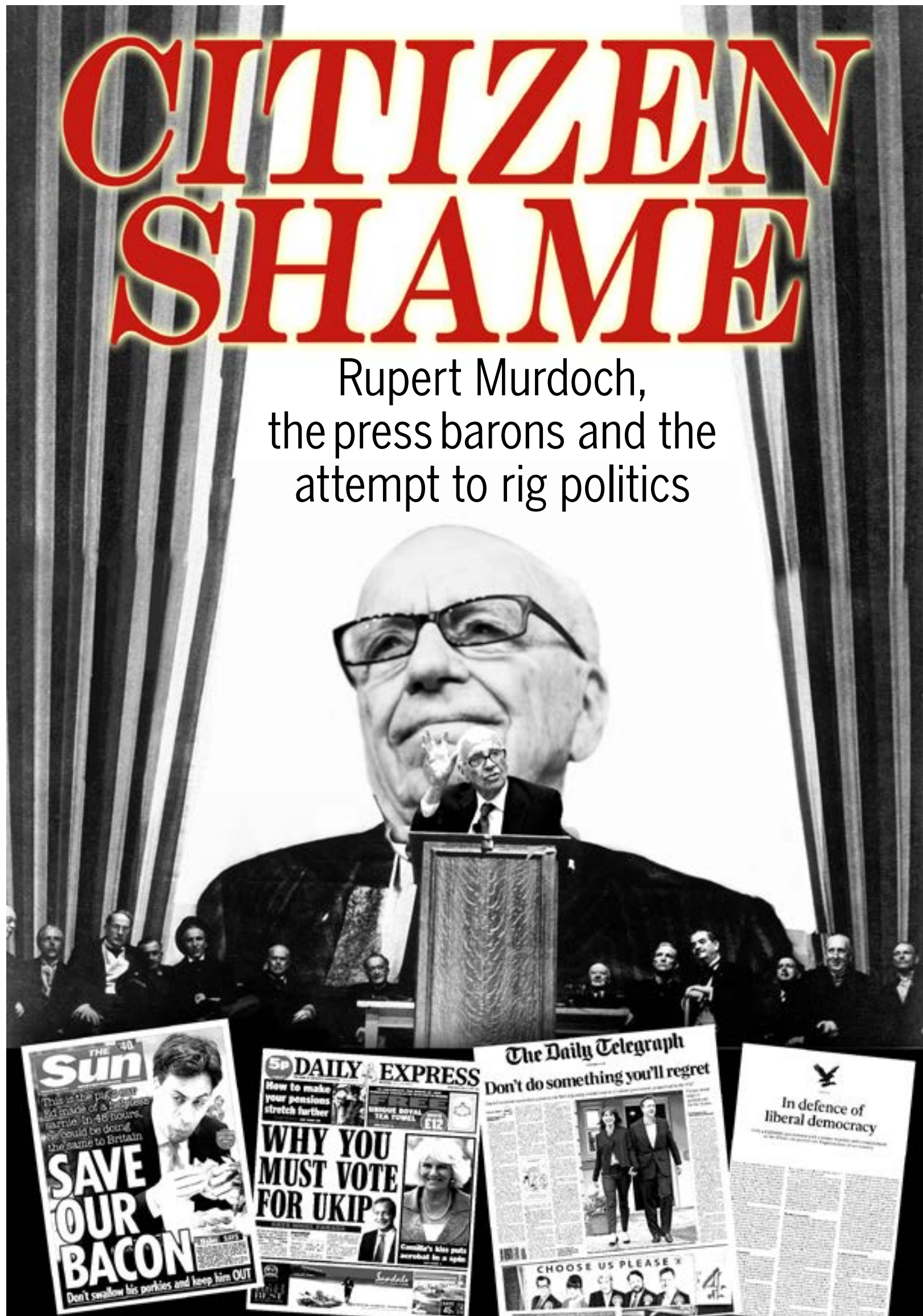
Yet despite this more than a million people subscribe to Brand’s YouTube channel The Trews. And around



**Party spin doctors are desperate to portray their leaders as either ‘statesman-like’ or ‘just like you and me’, but the act rarely pays off. Most people simply find politicians repulsive**



**The message is clear—what’s good for the top of society is good for the bottom**



Rupert Murdoch,  
the press barons and the  
attempt to rig politics

1.5 million people voted Yes in the independence referendum despite the fact that every single newspaper but one—the Sunday Herald—was opposed to it.

Now the Scottish Sun is in the bizarre position of supporting the SNP, while its sister paper south of the border ran a vicious smear campaign against the party.

This shows that while the media can shape and reinforce the dominant ideas in society, they can also reflect them.

Murdoch’s main goal is to sell as many newspapers as he can. So to a certain extent the content of those newspapers will have to relate to the popular mood.

This points to something important. The media have less control over society and the way that we think than some people give it credit for.

**T**HE SUN pulled out all the stops in its campaign for a Tory vote in England and Wales. But a recent YouGov poll showed that less than half its readership—just 42 percent—intended to vote Conservative.

The fact is that people’s ideas are not formed by the media, but by the material reality of their everyday lives.

Under capitalism we have very little control over our lives. The ruling class makes all the important decisions about how society is run.

And life under capitalism can also leave us feeling isolated—as if society is just a collection of individuals competing with each other.

So the mainstream media can work to reinforce those ideas—for instance they encourage us to blame migrants for the lack of jobs and for low wages.

But those ideas come from within capitalism itself.

It’s also the case that our lived experience can contradict what we’re told in the mainstream media.

### Undercuts

The right wing press relentlessly churns out Islamophobic and anti-migrant articles.

And for over a year Nigel Farage, leader of the racist Ukup party, enjoyed a huge amount of air-time and column inches.

But this doesn’t mean that the majority of people are racist. On 21 March this year more than 10,000 people joined the Stand up to Racism marches in London and Glasgow.

And of course, Farage lost his campaign to become MP for South Thanet.

Building the marches and Farage’s defeat both took a huge amount of campaigning by anti-racist activists. But they succeeded because

The Scottish Sun knows its readers are backing the SNP and desperately runs to catch up with them (right). Nicola Sturgeon has grown in popularity in Scotland, in part because of the rabid attacks on the SNP in the British press (below)



**NHS workers striking last year (middle). When working people fight back many old assumptions are up for challenge**

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

**Socialist Worker aims to challenge mainstream ideas and generate solidarity for those in struggle (above)**

people’s experiences of living and working alongside migrants and Muslims undercuts the racist lies.

People can start to question the ideas of the ruling class when their own experience appears to contradict them.

This is particularly true when people find themselves in direct confrontation with the system—such as during a strike.

So the outcome of an election isn’t simply to do with whichever party receives most support in the mainstream media.

It’s also shaped by material factors such as the level of class struggle and workers’ confidence in their ability to change things.

That’s why Socialist Worker is different to other newspapers. It’s not simply about left wing propaganda and exposing the lies of the ruling class, although it does this well.

It’s also a tool for supporting and organising resistance to austerity and racism—and ultimately capitalism.

The new Tory majority government makes that task all the more important.



## WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

## INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

## REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

## THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

## INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties.

We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

## THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to [www.swp.org.uk](http://www.swp.org.uk) or phone 020 7819 1170 for more information

{ SOCIALIST WORKER }  
BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

## ABERDEEN

**May 1968 the fire last time—when students and workers united**

Thu 21 May, 7pm,  
The Snug, Ma Cameron's,  
6-8 Little Belmont St,  
AB10 1JG

## BARNLEY

**A world to win**

Wed 20 May, 7pm,  
Barnley Civic Theatre,  
Hanson St,  
S70 2HZ

## BRISTOL: NORTH

**From Selma to Baltimore—the fight against racism in the US**

Thu 21 May, 7.30pm,  
5th Floor, The Canteen,  
Hamilton House,  
80 Stokes Croft,  
BS1 3QY

## BRISTOL: SOUTH

**May 1968—when students and workers united**

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
YHA, 14 Narrow Quay,  
BS1 4QA

## CAMBRIDGE

**The housing crisis—why the system can't provide decent homes for all**

Thu 21 May, 7.30pm,  
Shanghai Family Restaurant,  
39 Burleigh St,  
CB1 1DG

## CARDIFF

**Migrant lives matter—stop the slaughter in the Mediterranean**

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
Cathays Community Centre,  
Cathays Terrace,  
CF24 4HX

## CHELMSFORD

**How do we fight for women's liberation?**

Thu 21 May, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
Rainsford Rd,  
CM1 2QL

## CHESTERFIELD

**Prospects for socialists**

Thu 21 May, 7.30pm,  
Chesterfield Library (please enter via the Cafe Browser entrance),  
New Beetwell St, S40 1QL

## DONCASTER

**Race, class and police brutality in the US**

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
Women's Centre,  
21 Cleveland St,  
DN1 3EH

## EXETER

**Social movements and political parties**

Thu 28 May, 7pm,  
New Horizon Cafe,  
47 Longbrook St,  
EX4 6AW

## GLASGOW: SOUTH

**Capitalism versus the climate—is Naomi Klein right?**

Thu 28 May, 7.30pm,  
Govanhill Baths,  
99 Calder St, G42 7RA

## HUDDERSFIELD

**Pride, politics and protest—a revolutionary guide to LGBT liberation**

Wed 20 May, 6.30pm,  
Brian Jackson House,  
2 New North Parade (near both train and bus stations),  
HD1 5JP

## KIRKCALDY

**Race and racism today**

Mon 1 Jun, 7.30pm,  
Betty Nicol's Pub,  
297 High St, KY1 1JL

## LANCASTER

**Migrant lives matter—stop the slaughter in the Mediterranean**

Thu 21 May, 7pm,  
Friends Meeting House  
Meeting House Lane,  
LA1 1TX

## SOCIALIST WORKER PUBLIC MEETINGS

Fighting racism and austerity  
Where next after the elections?

## BIRMINGHAM:

## CITY CENTRE

Thu 21 May, 7pm,  
Priory rooms,  
Quaker Meeting House,  
40 Bull St,  
B4 6AF

## BRIGHTON

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
Ship St,  
BN1 1AF

## COVENTRY &amp; WARWICKSHIRE

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
Esquires Coffee Bar,  
Coventry Transport Museum,  
CV1 1JD

## DERBY

Thu 21 May, 7pm,  
West End Community  
Centre (next to Britannia  
Mill), Mackworth Rd,  
DE22 3BL

## LONDON: BRENT &amp; HARROW

## The roots of terrorism

Thu 28 May, 7.30pm,  
The Pepperpot Centre,  
1a Thorpe Close,  
Ladbroke Grove, W10 5XL  
(very close to the station)

## LONDON: CAMDEN

**Tell me why I don't like Mondays—Marxism and alienation**

Thu 21 May, 7pm,  
Theatro Technis,  
26 Crowndale Rd,  
NW1 1TT

## LONDON: EALING

**Socialists and the European Union**

Wed 27 May, 7.30pm,  
W3 Gallery, 185 High St,  
Acton, W3 9DJ

## LONDON: HACKNEY

**From coal mines to call centres—how has the working class changed?**

Thu 21 May, 7.30pm,  
The Round Chapel,  
2 Powerscroft Rd (corner  
Lower Clapton Rd),  
E5 0PU

## DUNDEE

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
Dundee Voluntary Action,  
10 Constitution Rd,  
DD1 1LL

## EDINBURGH

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
7 Victoria Terrace, EH1 2JL

## GLASGOW

Thu 21 May, 7.30pm,  
Jury's Inn Hotel,  
80 Jamaica St, G1 4QG

## HOME COUNTIES

Wed 27 May, 7.30pm,  
Upstairs Trinity Church Hall,  
1 Beaconsfield Rd (near  
St Albans City station),  
St Albans AL1 3RD

## IPSWICH

Tue 2 Jun, 7pm,  
Labour Club,  
33-35 Silent St, IP1 1TF

## LONDON: HORNSEY AND WOOD GREEN

**The ruling class—how do they get away with it?**

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
West Indian Cultural Centre,  
9 Clarendon Road, Haringey,  
N8 0DD

## LONDON: ISLINGTON

**Putin, Ukraine and the West—are we heading for another Cold War?**

Thu 21 May, 7pm  
The Old Fire Station,  
84 Mayton St, N7 6QT

## LONDON: KINGSTON

**Tell me why I don't like Mondays—Marx's theory of alienation**

Wed 27 May, 7pm,  
Kingston Quaker Centre,  
Fairfield East,  
KT1 2PT

## LONDON: NEWHAM

**The challenge of Podemos**

Wed 20 May, 7pm,  
Stratford Avenue Arcade,  
107-109 The Grove (next  
to Morrisons car park),  
E15 1HP

## LEEDS: CITY CENTRE

Thu 21 May, 7pm,  
Room 3, Swarthmore  
Education Centre,  
2-7 Woodhouse Square,  
LS3 1AD

## LEICESTER

Wed 20 May, 7pm,  
Leicester Adult  
Education College,  
2 Wellington St,  
LE1 6HL

## LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
Quaker Meeting House,  
1a Jewel Rd (off Hoe St),  
E17 4QU

## LONDON: WEST

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
West London Trade  
Union Club,  
33-35 Acton High St,  
W3 6ND

## LONDON: SOUTHWARK

**Tell me why I don't like Mondays—Marx's theory of alienation**

Thu 21 May, 7pm  
Snug Room, The Grand Union,  
26 Camberwell Grove (off  
Camberwell Church St),  
SE5 8RE

## LONDON: TOTTENHAM

**Is socialism possible in Britain?**

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
Kitabevi Cafe,  
410 Tottenham High Rd,  
N17 9JB

## MANCHESTER: CHORLTON

**Who was Lenin?**

Wed 27 May, 7pm,  
Proof Bar, 30 Manchester Rd,  
M21 0BQ

## MANCHESTER: CITY CENTRE

**What is imperialism?**

Thu 28 May, 7pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
6 Mount St, M2 5NS

## NORWICH

**Still the Enemy Within**  
Film showing, second part  
Thu 21 May, 7.30pm,

## MANCHESTER

Thu 21 May, 7pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
6 Mount St,  
M2 5NS

## ROTHERHAM

Wed 20 May, 7pm,  
Talbot Lane  
Methodist Church,  
Moorgate St, S60 2EY

## SHEFFIELD: CITY CENTRE

Thu 21 May, 7.30pm,  
Central United  
Reformed Church,  
60 Norfolk St (near the  
Crucible theatre),  
S1 2JB

## YORK

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
Priory Street  
Community Centre,  
Priory St,  
YO1 6EZ

## VAUXHALL CENTRE

Johnson Place, NR2 2SA

## NOTTINGHAM

**From Ferguson to Baltimore—why police violence persists**

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
International Community  
Centre, 61b Mansfield Rd,  
NG1 3FN

## PORTSMOUTH

**Will the revolution be televised? Socialists and the media**

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
Somerstown Central,  
Rivers St, PO5 4EY

## SOUTHAMPTON

**Their vision of education and ours**

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
High Street Cafe,  
153 High St, SO14 2BT

## WOLVERHAMPTON/WALSALL

**Migrant lives matter—stop the slaughter in the Mediterranean**

Wed 20 May, 7.30pm,  
Grain Store, King St,  
WV1 1ST

## YORK

## Malcolm X—the road to revolution

Wed 27 May, 7.30pm,  
Sea Horse Hotel,  
4 Fawcett St,  
YO10 4AH

## { MOVEMENT EVENTS }

## LONDON

**A Socialist History of the French Revolution**

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# Musical of matchgirls' fight strikes a light in dark times

The famous strike by young women match factory workers in 1888 inspired Glasgow musical *Striking a Light*, writer **Colin Poole** told *Socialist Worker*

**Where did you get the idea for doing a musical about the Matchgirls' Strike of 1888?**

We originally got the idea after a fundraiser at the Govanhill Baths in Glasgow, where the play will open on 19 May.

That's significant in itself, as there was a big battle to keep it open in 2001.

**What does the musical focus on?**

Match bosses Bryant and May tried to get their workers to sign a letter denouncing a newspaper article by women's rights campaigner Annie Besant. Her article attacked the appalling working conditions.

That's what sparked the walkout, and we've got that in the musical.

The main characters are two young matchgirls, Kathleen and her next door neighbour Mary.

Mary is a bit more experienced, but Kathleen hasn't been politically involved before.

Kathleen's father is opposed to the walkout in the beginning, but is won around.

But her brother Tom is very supportive. He's a docker, who's just become involved in socialist politics through the unions.

**It's a mixture of a musical and a play. So how did you structure it?**

We wanted to keep the musical element within the play, but still wanted to draw out the politics.

That's why we structured it as a "play within a play", set in a dance hall.

To make it all fit together we decided to add another character, Burlington Bertie, to narrate the story.

**What sort of songs have you used in the musical and how did you**



'OUR FIGHT is your fight'—matchgirls bring the solidarity onto the stage

**choose them?**

We've used a combination of old songs from the period and new songs that we specifically wrote for the musical.

We've also used *It's The Same The Whole World Over*, which is already quite a political song, but we rewrote the lyrics to attack the bosses more.

**Do you think the story of the Matchgirls' Strike is relevant today?**

Many of the matchgirls were actually migrant workers from Ireland.

Bryant and May tried to blame migrant workers and pit workers against each other.

They use all the same divide and rule tactics that politicians and bosses are using now.

The way the bosses are presented is also relevant.

We explicitly portray Bryant and May as fat cats—and make them look very feline.

Women workers are still not paid as much as men today.

So it's also important to tell the story of the first successful strike by women workers in Britain.

**Has this fed into much of an atmosphere around it?**

Yes, definitely. We've already given 25 tickets away to the Unison union homelessness strikers.

But there's also been a lot of interest after people found out how it resonates with what's going on today.

And the musical also shows how people can fight back against it.

**Striking a Light**

Written by Fatima Uygun, Colin Poole and Jim Monaghan  
Govanhill Baths, Glasgow G42 7RA  
Until 23 May  
[brownpapertickets.com](http://brownpapertickets.com)

## Dark documentaries explore struggles and disasters

### EVENTS

#### SHEFFIELD DOC FEST

Sheffield  
5-10 June  
For more information go to [sheffdocfest.com](http://sheffdocfest.com)

THE SHEFFIELD Doc Fest has announced its 2015 line-up. A lot of the material is political but also dark.

Sheffield Doc Fest is the largest film festival of its kind in Britain.

Every year more than

150 short and feature length documentary films from around the world are screened.

This year's festival will open with director Joshua Oppenheimer's *The Look of Silence*, a follow-up to his last film *The Act of Killing*.

Both focus on a man whose brother was murdered in the 1965-66 Indonesian coup. In the first he was searching for the killers.

In the follow-up he gets

Scene from *The Black Panthers—Vanguards of the Revolution*

to confront them.

Next up, *The Russian Woodpecker* follows Ukrainian artist Fedor Alexandrovich's quest to uncover what lay behind the nuclear disaster in his home town Chernobyl.

He puts the disaster down to a dubious Soviet conspiracy to cover-up an incompetent military project nearby.

A few films worth catching also focus on radical politics.

One is *A Syrian Love*

Story. Director Sean McAllister follows revolutionaries Raghda and Amer during the last four years of fighting in Syria.

Another is *The Black Panthers—Vanguards of the Revolution*.

Director Stanley Nelson uses archive footage and personal accounts from Black Panther Party members, FBI informants and journalists to piece together their story.

**Tomáš Tengely-Evans**

### EXHIBITION

#### CONSCIENCE AND CONFLICT—BRITISH ARTISTS AND THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

Laing Art Gallery,  
Newcastle NE1 8AG.

Until 7 June

Free entry

[twmuseums.org.uk](http://twmuseums.org.uk)

THE SPANISH republic of 1931-39 became a rallying cry for socialists and working class militants who wanted to fight against General Franco's fascist army.

Artists from a broad range of movements responded to

Self portrait by Felicia Brown, who fought in Spain (detail)

the Spanish Civil War.

The socialist Artists International Association launched a "Help Spain!" campaign.

Meanwhile, others tried to push the Tory government to send aid. Surrealist artists dressed up like prime minister Neville Chamberlain on the 1938 May Day Parade mocking his appeasement of fascist regimes.

The exhibition also looks at the work of artists who went to fight in Spain. In particular, Felicia Brown produced striking war art and also fought and died as part of a Communist militia in Barcelona.

### TOP 5 BOOKS

Bestsellers at Bookmarks, the socialist Bookshop

1 **Ukip—the Ugly Face of Politics**

2 **This Changes Everything—Capitalism vs the Climate**  
Naomi Klein

3 **A Rebel's Guide to Eleanor Marx**  
Siobhan Brown

4 **CLR James in Hackney**  
Gaverne Bennett and Christian Hogsbjerg

5 **Detroit '67—the Year that Changed Soul**  
Stuart Cosgrove

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Why not visit the shop at 1 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QE





**N**EW advances in genetic science could answer one of its most famous mysteries according to Marxist scientist John Parrington.

John told Socialist Worker, “I’ve always been fascinated by the question of what makes us different from animals. What’s the biological basis for our ability to think about the world and act on it?”

The gulf separating what we are capable of from even our closest relatives, chimpanzees, is enormous.

But how can that be the case if our bodies are programmed by the genes we inherit from our parents? Humans and chimps have a staggering 99 percent of the same genes.

John’s new book, *The Deeper Genome*, explores this and other issues raised by fundamental changes in the way we understand genetics.

In 2012 a project called Encode challenged one of the fundamental assumptions behind the study of the genome.

The controversy this sparked inspired John to write the book.

The genome is the sequence of information, in the form of a long molecule of a compound called DNA, at the heart of every cell in our bodies.

Scientists expected to find it made up of genes, or “coding DNA” that tell our cells how to develop.

But by 2002 a major research project called the Human Genome Project had mapped out our DNA—and genes turned out to make up only 2 percent of the genome.

The other 98 percent was written off as junk.

### Junk

But the results of Encode suggested this “junk” could play a crucial role of its own.

John said, “How could that huge difference between us and chimpanzees be down to just 1 percent of genes that are different?”

“It’s looking like the difference could be a lot more than we thought once you take the rest of the genome into account.”

This is shifting the cutting edge of science to the study of how the genome is used by the organism—and from the properties of individual genes to the way they interact with each other. This field is called epigenetics.

DNA is often compared to a blueprint.

But that blueprint is only a fraction of the story. John’s book argues, “Even a blueprint must be read by an architect or engineer, so what was the equivalent for DNA?”

New techniques are coming with the rapid changes in theory. John is enthusiastic

HUMANS AND chimps have 99 percent of the same genes—but can the huge difference in ability be down to 1 percent?

# DELVING DEEP INTO OUR GENES

There is a revolution taking place in molecular biology. Scientist John Parrington spoke to Dave Sewell about his new book that explores the issues for a mass audience



John Parrington

about the possibilities they create.

For example, gene editing opens the way to everything from personalised medicine to treatments for schizophrenia and Aids.

Soon inherited diseases such as cystic fibrosis could be identified and treated in the embryo.

Animals could be bred with hearts like ours to help develop cures for heart disease.

But beyond that, John argues that “epigenetics is giving us



**New techniques are coming with the rapid changes in theory**

an insight into what makes us human, and I think that’s going to become a much bigger area of research.

“How can you then explain human consciousness?”

John’s book goes through the history of evolutionary theory, from Charles Darwin’s simple, revolutionary idea of natural selection to the vast laboratories of the 21st century.

It’s full of memorable characters—such as John Gurdon, who finished last in his biology

class at college only to demonstrate the role of cell environment in shaping development by cloning a frog.

Jacques Monod researched links between enzymes and cell growth while secretly leading a section of the French resistance to the Nazi occupation.

His colleague Agnes Ullman was a dissident who escaped Hungary under a bathtub after Soviet tanks crushed the 1956 revolution.

It’s also the story of the tension between two ways of studying complex systems—reducing them to their component parts, or studying the whole.

These can mirror attitudes within human society.

Socialists reject the idea that human behaviour can be reduced to biology, or that “there is no such thing as society”, just individuals.

John emphasised, “There is a fundamental difference between humans and animals.

“We are shaped by our biology.

“But our relationship to our environment is also shaped by our ability to evolve society in a way that’s nothing to do with biology.

“The idea that we can be reduced to biology is exposed in revolutions.

“The idea that those at the bottom of society are inferior and meant to be bossed around is shown up when they struggle.

“We see that ordinary people have a huge potential and creativity, and are denied the opportunity to express it by capitalism.”

**I**N SOME ways the rise of epigenetics represents a move away from reductionism, which John welcomes.

But he also warns against throwing the baby out with the bath water.

“Biology has been pushed such a long way through reductionist methods,” he said.

“The traditional view of the genome is very atomistic. It says there’s something called a gene that ‘codes’ for each characteristic we have, and that our genome is just a collection of these genes.

“It was a very revolutionary idea in its time. It goes back to the search for mathematical laws to explain how traits are inherited. But it’s quite a simplistic idea that has now come to its limit.”

One of the most dramatic findings in the book is that what happens in our lives can affect the DNA we pass on to our children.

One study demonstrates how childhood stress in some boys altered the genomes of their sperm.

Others suggest genetic differences in some people whose grandparents lived through famines, that natural selection alone can’t explain.

“It’s a damning indictment of what stress can do for a person,” said John.



“What’s not been looked at is the more positive side.

If you get involved in politics or live through revolutionary changes can that have a positive effect on future generations?

“It’s all very complicated and very hard to test, but it certainly looks like society and biology could be more closely related than thought.

“It’s a very radical change in how we view the genome, and it’s a huge debate.”

Also controversial has been the rehabilitation of one of the earliest theorists mentioned in the book, Jean-Baptiste Lamarck.

Writing at the time of the French Revolution in the late 18th century, he suggested that organisms could adapt themselves to their environments over the generations.

It was a provocative and materialist break from the idea that they were created, fully formed, by an all-knowing and all-powerful creator.

But what Lamarck couldn’t identify was the mechanism that allowed them to do this.

Some 70 years later Darwin found such a mechanism. Organisms produce a variety of offspring, each with slight changes produced essentially at random.

## Environment

But only those best suited to their environment survive to reproduce in turn.

It is often ridiculed as the idea that a giraffe could give its offspring a longer neck to eat higher leaves through sheer force of will.

But the possibility that variation may not always be completely random is bringing Lamarck’s ghost back into the mainstream.

“Suddenly the idea that the environment can shape evolution no longer seems so absurd,” said John.

“Recent findings are also challenging the idea that evolution has to be a gradual process.

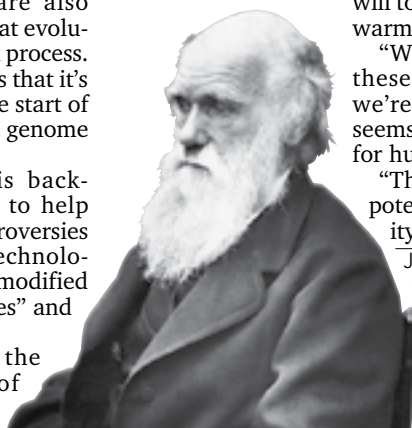
“The exciting thing is that it’s shown we’re only at the start of understanding how the genome works.”

John draws on his background as a socialist to help make sense of the controversies thrown up by new technologies, from genetically modified food to “designer babies” and animal testing.

He said, “One of the great indictments of capitalism is that the



**A genome diagram (top) A scientist reading chromosomes in a lab (above) Charles Darwin (below)**



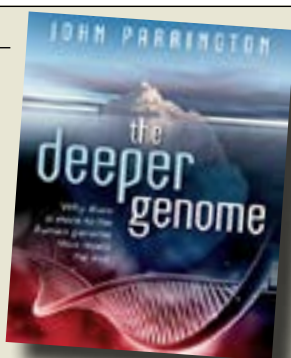
more we create these incredible tools for understanding the world and changing the world, the less we seem as species to be in control of our destiny.

“People are dying because they’ve no access to clean water. And there’s no political will to do anything about global warming.

“We’re constantly getting these new technologies, but we’re stuck in a society that seems incapable of using them for human good.

“That contrast between the potential and the actual reality is why I’m a socialist.”

John Parrington is an associate professor in the department of pharmacology at the University of Oxford. He is also a regular columnist for Socialist Worker



## READ MORE

**The Deeper Genome**  
by John Parrington  
published 28 May,  
available for pre-order  
£18.99

**How did human beings evolve?**  
by John Parrington  
bit.ly/1JTnvDi

**A shared human history is written in our genes**  
by John Parrington  
bit.ly/1H3ckas

**Available at Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to www.bookmarksbookshop.co.uk**



## FOCUS ON CHINA

# Imperial boundaries are being redefined in South East Asia

China’s ability to exert its influence in neighbouring countries shows the limitations of US imperialism, writes **Tomáš Tengely-Evans**

THE RECENT crisis in Nepal has highlighted the challenge to US imperialism in Asia.

After the earthquake, while Western imperialist powers jostled for position with promises of aid, the Chinese government stepped in and supplied relief.

For China, Nepal is a key part of its “new Silk Road” project, which aims to forge infrastructure links through Central Asia to European markets.

This assertiveness has fuelled a popular perception that China was on course to become the world’s new superpower. But other commentators look to its recent economic slowdown and say its rise was a mirage. Neither side is right.

The US remains the world’s largest military power and maintains its dominance within global capitalism. But Nepal showed China is able to assert its interests in its regional sphere of influence. It pointed to one of the crises facing US imperialism.

That’s why US president Barack Obama has attempted to “pivot” US foreign policy towards South East Asia. He’s tried to increase trade links and beef up the military presence, placing 60 percent of the US Navy in the Pacific.

The threat China poses to US dominance seems evident. China has weathered the global crisis much better than the West, growing 56 percent from 2007-10 compared with the West’s 3 percent.

During the crisis China became the world’s second largest economy, leading in manufacturing, exports and energy consumption.

This rapid growth both underpins the expansion of the Chinese military and makes it necessary to secure new markets.

Meanwhile, the West’s military spending has relatively declined since

**US PRESIDENT Obama meets Chinese president Xi Jinping**

## BACK STORY

**China became the world’s biggest economy last year but the US is still dominant**

● China’s economy was worth £11.4 trillion and the US’s was £11.3 trillion in 2014 according to the International Monetary Fund

● The US had been the world’s biggest economy since it overtook Britain in 1872

● The IMF expects the Chinese economy to grow 7.1 percent in 2015 and the US by 3.1 percent

the crisis. Chinese military spending grew by 43.5 percent in 2008-13, while US spending rose by 0.1 percent.

Nonetheless the US’s military budget still stood at a staggering £390 billion in 2013 compared to China’s £85 billion.

They’re predicted to converge by 2028. But for now China is in no position to challenge the US militarily and remains dependent on

**“The US military budget stood at £390 billion in 2013 compared to China’s £85 billion**

the US navy to safeguard shipping routes.

Last year China became the world’s largest economy according to the International Monetary Fund. While it came out of the crisis stronger, the government’s response has created its own problems.

It made a £2 trillion cash injection into the economy. But much of this went into a speculative real estate boom and it has also fuelled the growth of a barely regulated “shadow” banking sector.

Chinese capitalism is also coming up against a much deeper profitability crisis.

Its rapid expansion rested on bringing in cheap labour from rural areas, targeting foreign investment and importing used factory equipment.

But the supply of new labour is drying up so labour costs are rising. And little of the profit from foreign investment actually remains within the country.

China is still able to challenge the US economically and assert itself regionally—and the limits on internal expansion are driving its need for foreign markets.

But this does not mean China is going to replace the US—they aren’t fighting it out on a one to one basis.

The crisis is a product of the imperialist competition between many capitalist states, such as Japan and Vietnam.

China’s rise shows that while the US remains the dominant superpower, imperialism features rivalry between many rising powers.



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  - What sort of left do we need?
  - Are the Greens a left alternative?
  - How can we challenge UKIP?

- Plus...**
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  - Why are there so few strikes?
  - Is Naomi Klein right? Capitalism vs climate
  - How can Palestine be free?

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# Authorities ‘let abusers continue’ in Rotherham

Reports from more than a decade ago exposed how cops failed abuse victims, reports Sadie Robinson

**NEWLY REVEALED** reports expose how police failed to protect children from abuse in South Yorkshire.

Dr Angie Heal produced the reports in 2003 and 2006 when working as a drugs analyst with South Yorkshire Police.

In 2003 Heal reported “significant abuse” mainly affecting girls and young women.

She exposed links between child sexual exploitation (CSE), drug crime and violence in Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster.

Some of Heal’s findings led to widespread shock when Professor Alexis Jay’s report into CSE in Rotherham repeated them 11 years later.

One girl was doused in petrol to deter her from reporting abuse. Abusers took a 12 year old girl to a hotel and made her watch them have sex with her 14 year old sister.

The abuse in Rotherham was “very organised” and involved “systematic physical and sexual violence”. Perpetrators were “usually well known” to the authorities.

Yet police failed to tackle abuse even when victims came forward.

One 18 year old woman reported a rape to police and was arrested for theft. No one asked why she had gone to the police station.

## Impunity

Heal said victims were “often seen as bringing the situation on themselves”. Some officers described victims in derogatory language. Such attitudes allowed abusers to “carry on with impunity”.

Heal’s 2003 report noted “professional men known to have sex with women involved in prostitution”. These included a local councillor and off duty police officers.

“Another young woman who works in a red light area said she had sex with a police officer,” wrote Heal. “He was in a patrol car in full uniform at the time.”

A 15 year old girl was charged with prostitution after police discovered her performing a sex act in a

## BACK STORY

**Drugs analyst Dr Angie Heal exposed police failings around child sex exploitation in two reports in 2003 and 2006**

● Much of the shocking findings of Professor Alexis Jay’s report last year were already revealed in Heal’s report 11 years earlier

● On several occasions victims were arrested and no action taken against their abusers

● Heal found no evidence to support widely reported claims that abuse wasn’t dealt with because perpetrators were Asian

car. In a horrifying twist, “The magistrate who convicted her was the very man who had paid her to have sex with him,” Heal wrote.

Much recent reporting of CSE has focused on abusers’ ethnicity.

Heal said the main groups of perpetrators of organised CSE in Rotherham were Asian. She said some workers in Rotherham believed this stopped CSE being effectively dealt with.

But there was no evidence to back up this theory in her reports. Heal added, “Perpetrators and paedophiles come from a number of different ethnic groups in the town”.

She said Asian abusers “are a handful of men from sizeable communities of which the vast majority are law abiding citizens”.

Heal referred to Keighley, West Yorkshire, where mainstream media focused on Asian men abusing girls. “Police, social services, community leaders and mothers of girls who are being exploited say race is not the issue,” she said. “Other groups including whites are involved.”

Heal added that Asian, black and eastern European girls were “undoubtedly” being exploited too but this was “much more hidden”.



## More online

Revealed—Rotherham cops linked to child sex abuse [bit.ly/1F9Gu80](http://bit.ly/1F9Gu80)

## Hillsborough inquests

**FORMER CHIEF** inspector Norman Bettison arrives at the inquests

PICTURE: PA

# Cops knew they had no grounds for ‘conspiracy theory’ that blamed fans

POLICE WERE guilty of a “serious failing” during the Hillsborough football stadium disaster, a former chief inspector has admitted.

Some 96 Liverpool fans died as a result of the 1989 disaster.

Former South Yorkshire Police (SYP) chief inspector Sir Norman Bettison finished giving evidence to fresh inquests into the deaths last week.

In 1989 Bettison set out a series of criticisms of police that were hard to counter. He told the court they “add up to a serious failing”.

Bettison was part of the Wain team that prepared SYP’s proof of evidence to Lord Justice Taylor’s inquiry into the disaster.

Bettison agreed that none of the criticisms were included in that proof of evidence. He added that he had nothing to do with the final submission.

He agreed that the section he wrote included evidence containing “disparaging comments about fans which are, to some extent, gratuitous and not necessary to a proper understanding of the event”.

SYP suggested to Taylor that ticketless fans “conspired to arrive

late” and force police to admit them to the match by causing trouble.

Bettison said he told a Police Federation meeting there was no grounds for the theory. But he had suggested it could be referred to publicly to show police were “active”.

Bettison wrote a note to SYP chief constable Peter Wright dated 7 July 1989 about an upcoming TV documentary. It said SYP could be presented as “a caring and professional organisation, doggedly pursuing the facts surrounding the disaster, eg, the conspiracy theory.”

Peter Wilcock QC asked about a meeting at SYP Police Federation headquarters on 3 October attended by Tory MP Michael Shersby. Wilcock said the minutes made clear that the Police Federation intended to plan a counter attack on Taylor’s findings with Shersby.

Bettison said, “I read that in the notes. To what extent back in 1989 I knew what it was referring to is another point entirely.”

Wilcock asked about Bettison’s appointment to chief constable of

Merseyside Police. The court was shown minutes of an informal meeting with the police authority and Bettison in November 1998.

The interview panel asked him about which incident he would most like to forget.

Wilcock asked why Bettison did not mention Hillsborough. Bettison said, “Nothing about Hillsborough embarrasses me”.

Bettison’s barrister and Police Federation representative Paul Greaney asked Bettison about his written account of the disaster.

Bettison finished writing it after he was appointed to the Wain team. Greaney said, “If the aim of that team was to blame the fans, it might be thought that your statement would pursue that theme.”

Bettison’s statement said, “All the way along my journey I was continually asked for spare tickets and swaps by young male Liverpool supporters.”

It described groups of Liverpool supporters who seemed “very aggressive” on leaving the ground. The inquests continue.

For reports from the inquests this week go to [socialistworker.co.uk](http://socialistworker.co.uk)



## IN BRIEF

**Huge vote over Network Rail pay**

RMT RAIL union members at Network Rail operations and maintenance have delivered a solid 80 percent vote for strikes. They rejected an “inadequate” pay offer and a failure to guarantee jobs.

The union balloted nearly 16,000 members. The turnout was 60 percent. Almost 8,000 voted for strikes.

The union is considering the result. No strike dates had been called as Socialist Worker went to press.

**Dudley unites to stop Britain First**

MORE THAN 150 residents of Dudley united against Britain First’s attempts to create racial division in our town with their racist Islamophobia last Saturday.

**Tony Barnsley**

**ITV workers to strike for a raise**

WORKERS AT ITV were set to strike on Thursday of this week in a dispute over pay.

Members of the Bectu, NUJ and Unite unions have rejected a below-inflation two percent pay increase.

**BBC bosses face a holiday fightback**

STUDIO MANAGERS working on BBC radio programmes are balloting for strikes.

The Bectu union members are in dispute over the amount of leave they are allowed to take after working a public holiday.

The ballot was set to end on Wednesday of this week.

**Cleaners demand a living wage**

THE GMB union is balloting cleaners in Kensington and Chelsea, west London, in a pay dispute.

The workers are employed by contractors OCS as part of Estate Housing Cleaning.

They are demanding £9.15 per hour and are fighting proposals to move to monthly pay. The ballot was set to close on Friday of this week.

**Offshore workers ballot on hold**

THE GMB union has put a ballot of offshore workers covered by the Offshore Contractors Agreement on hold in order to hold more talks with bosses.

Union members previously voted to hold a ballot against changes to shift patterns.

**Navy workers fight enforced changes**

RMT UNION members working for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary have voted for strikes and action short of a strike. The dispute is over the imposition of new conditions without consultation with the union.

## CLIMATE



PROTESTING AGAINST a third runway at Heathrow Airport

PICTURE: HACAN

## KINGSLEY BURRELL

**Burrell cop’s evidence ‘wrong’ says coroner**

by ANNETTE MACKIN

THE CORONER at the inquest into the death of Kingsley Burrell has questioned the recollection of an officer involved in his arrest and restraint.

Kingsley died in 2011 in Birmingham after being arrested when he called police for help saying he had been harassed by a gang while out with his son.

He was taken to a mental health unit and died days later.

PC Paul Adey said he remembered looking back into the mental health seclusion room and saw Kingsley lift his head and look back around before lying down once his restraints had been removed.

But coroner Louise Hunt said other witnesses had told the inquest that Kingsley’s arms dropped to his sides and he never moved once his restraints were off.

Adey said, “I know what I saw—he raised his head.” Hunt replied, “I suggest you are wrong officer.”

In a statement given in December 2011 Adey had said he looked back at Kingsley through a window in the door.

But Hunt said the door’s window was covered by a locked hatch to which only nurses had the key.

Hunt is expected to begin summing up next week.

The inquest continues.

## EDUCATION

**College walkout over cuts**

WORKERS AT City and Islington College were set to strike on Thursday of this week. They are fighting threatened job losses resulting from cuts to adult education.

The UCU union members plan to begin a two-day walkout on Tuesday of next week.

The national union has agreed to prepare and coordinate strike ballots across colleges if bosses do not give guarantees on job protection.

Colleges across Wales also plan to coordinate action unless they are granted seeking similar guarantees on jobs.

●Send messages of support to sean.vernell@candi.ac.uk

■ACTIVISTS IN Greenwich, south east London, met on Wednesday of last week to discuss the fight to defend Greenwich College.

College bosses want to scrap some sites, slash adult education courses and impose new, worse contracts on workers.

UCU union members have taken several days of strikes against the new contracts.

Lynne Chamberlain is a UCU member at the college.

She told Socialist Worker, “The meeting vowed to campaign across the area to save provision.

“College students were there and they included a lot of retired people who don’t want to see their courses cut.”



On strike at Greenwich college last month

PICTURE: MARK DUNK

## ROUND-UP

TWO VICTIMISED University of Bolton workers lost appeals against their sackings for gross misconduct last week.

Bosses sacked Damien and Jenny Markey after stories in the press about the vice-chancellor’s finances.

A protest is planned in the town this Saturday.

●Petition at bit.ly/1K20IW8

■NEARLY 700 people have signed a petition opposing planned cuts at London Metropolitan University.

Bosses plan to slash 165 academic and professional support staff.

●Petition at bit.ly/1lwQwD5

■UNIVERSITY OF Aberdeen UCU union members are balloting for strikes over jobs.

Bosses want to cut 150 jobs and have refused to rule out compulsory redundancies. The ballot ends on 8 June.

■TEACHING UNIONS at Small Heath School in Birmingham were set to strike on Wednesday of this week over plans to turn the school into an academy.

●Send messages of support to Simon O’Hara at banut@btclick.com

**Protests for climate action**

AROUND 50 campaigners held a silent protest inside Heathrow airport’s Terminal 5 on Sunday of last week.

They wore breathing masks to highlight the air pollution that a third runway would bring.

The Airports Commission has announced a further consultation into air pollution at Heathrow.

And the Supreme Court has ordered the government to produce new plans on tackling air pollution.

■THE CLIMATE Coalition—an alliance that includes the Campaign against Climate Change—has called a mass lobby of parliament on Wednesday 17 June.

The Tories’ manifesto calls for scrapping support for onshore wind farms while expanding dangerous fracking and nuclear power.

Transport to the lobby is being organised from around Britain.

●For more information go to fortheloveof.org.uk

## TOWER HAMLETS

**Back Khan in east London**

DOZENS OF activists were on the streets of Tower Hamlets last Saturday to launch the campaign to elect Rabina Khan as Tower Hamlets mayor.

The election on 11 June follows an assault on democracy by an unelected barrister and Tory minister Eric Pickles.

They removed elected mayor Lutfur Rahman and handed Tower Hamlets council’s powers over to four commissioners appointed by Pickles.

They barred the party Rahman stood for, Tower Hamlets First, from elections.

They are out to crush the council.

The attack has clear racist



Rabina Khan

and Islamophobic elements.

There will be a furious campaign to stop Rabina by all the established parties.

The key to winning will be to mobilise the thousands at last week’s rally into networks in every ward to carry the arguments.

**Paul McGarr**

## STEEL WORKERS

**Ballot is on for steel strike**

WORKERS AT Tata Steel plants around Britain are set to vote on strikes to defend their pensions. The biggest union, Community, began a two-week ballot on Wednesday of last week with the Unite and GMB unions following soon after.

Bosses want to close

the British Steel pension scheme to new members in April of next year and stop it accruing in value.

They plan to remove workers’ right to get their full pensions at 60.

Around 800 workers rallied at Port Talbot in South Wales last Saturday.

## FBU CONFERENCE

**Firefighters should not have called off their action**

THE FIREFIGHTERS’ FBU union biennial conference had just begun as Socialist Worker went to press.

The Tories have led an assault on firefighters’ pensions—and the new government will ramp up attacks on the fire service.

Firefighters have struck more than 50 times in 18 months. But the solid walkouts were not backed up with a serious programme of action.

In the run up to the election the union leadership wound down the action in the hope of a Labour victory.

Yusuf Timms, a firefighter

in north London, told Socialist Worker, “The union’s strategy was a mistake and it has come to nothing.”

A meeting was planned on Tuesday night for delegates to debate the way forward.

A Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) meeting was also set to take place on Thursday to discuss what political direction the union should take.

Yusuf said, “We need to start to develop a new leadership in the union that is willing to organise and lead a fight at both rank and file and at national level.”



## COUNCIL WORKERS

# Bromley strikers can beat Tory cuts plan

by MARK DUNK

**WORKERS AT** Tory-run Bromley Council in south London are resisting a vicious programme of cuts and privatisation that could cut the council workforce from 4,000 to 300.

Unite union members in the council's parks team walked out on Tuesday of last week. On Thursday they joined all Unite members at the council, except schools staff, for a further 24-hour strike.

Staff in passenger services and care workers were set for a seven-day strike from Wednesday of this week, ending with another council-wide strike next Tuesday.

Bromley Unite chair Adam Jenkins told Socialist Worker, "This is an ideological crusade by Bromley Council."

Adam works as a park ranger but his job is under threat from the cuts. He said, "We are being transferred over to a private firm on 1 June but we still haven't been given a job description."

The Tories are subsidising getting rid of experienced staff, which will drive down pay and conditions.

The Landscape Group is set to run the parks but bosses there already plan ten redundancies and Bromley



STRIKERS AT Bromley Civic Centre on Thursday of last week

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Council has agreed to pay redundancy for transferred council staff.

## Profit

Adam said, "Councils should be run for residents not profit. Parks aren't part of statutory council provision. But kids living in a tower block need to be able to go out and kick a football."

A striking care worker from Astley day centre explained

why they are walking out. "We work with people with learning disabilities who have no voice. As their support workers we are striking to protect their interests. There is no place for profit in care."

Unite branch secretary Kathy Smith addressed the strike rally on Thursday of last week. She said, "We're stronger when we're not this service here and that service there, but all together."

Despite the disappointment of another Tory government the Bromley strike gives us all a chance to give the Tories an early bloody nose. It deserves widespread support.

●Rush messages of support to kathleen.smith@bromley.gov.uk Send donations to Kathy Smith, Unite Office, Bromley Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, BR1 3UH (cheques payable to Bromley Unite)

## HOMELESSNESS CASEWORKERS

## Council has head in sand as dispute grows stronger

by RAYMIE KIERNAN

**THE ALL-OUT** strike at Labour-run Glasgow City Council by homelessness caseworkers entered its seventh week on Tuesday of this week.

The workers demand to be regraded and paid equal to colleagues with the same responsibilities—up to £5,000 more.

Council bosses are continuing with their line that it is business as usual for the city's homelessness service.

But they have signs posted on every casework team office door saying that during the strike, "we are operating an emergency

service only".

Last week's election wipeout for Scottish Labour gave city councillors a glimpse of their own futures if they continue with cuts.

The result was a hot topic on Friday morning's picket lines. Striker and Unison union rep Stuart told Socialist Worker he hoped the city's new MPs would speak out in support.

"We have great support from SNP trade union members. But the political reality is clear for the city's politicians if they implement austerity."

"If the SNP doesn't deliver it will provoke a similar reaction."

●Keep up to date with the latest—Glasgow Homeless Caseworkers Strike on Facebook



Glasgow strikers are not going away

## HOMELESSNESS

## Campers call for homes

**AROUND 200** people rallied in central Manchester last Saturday in solidarity with homeless people and supporters camped out in the town square.

Soup kitchen volunteer Adam has been staying in the camp for over three weeks.

He told Socialist Worker, "There's been a big increase in rough sleepers."

"The council redistributing money means 70 beds in shelters have been lost."

And the Tories' welfare cuts and the bedroom tax have made more people homeless."

The occupiers defeated an attempt to evict them in court on Thursday of last week.

They are also angry at the Central Library not allowing people who "look homeless" in to use its toilets.

Adam said, "The council has a duty of care to provide shelter."

## REFUSE WORKERS

## Barking bins set for 22 days of walkouts

by TOMÁŠ TENGYEVANS

**REFUSE LORRY** drivers in Barking and Dagenham, east London, were set to strike for 13 days from Wednesday of this week.

The workers are fighting bosses' plans to slash their pay by £1,000 a year.

If talks don't go ahead, they then plan to walk out from 30 May until 7 June.

The GMB union members' action is having a big impact as rubbish begins to pile up on the streets.

Council bosses are clearly rattled and have accused the union of

holding them to "ransom".

Workers completed a ten-day strike on Friday of last week and are determined to fight on.

Bosses have refused to negotiate in talks at conciliation service Acas, only offering workers a £400 "goodwill" gesture.

## Break

During the last walkout bosses tried to break the strike using workers in the Unison and Unite unions that have signed up to the shoddy deal.

But they refused to cross the picket line. It's this sort of solidarity that

can win this dispute.

Workers have raised serious concerns about health and safety and allegations of management's bullying tactics and attacks on their union.

Bosses want to halve the time drivers have to do safety checks on their lorries to 15 minutes.

If something were to go wrong, responsibility would fall on the drivers.

The attack on workers' pay is part of a bigger attack on local services—it is becoming one of the faultlines in the battle against austerity.

Every trade unionist needs to get behind them.

●Join the picket lines from 6am outside Frizlands Lane Depot, Rainham Road North, Dagenham, RM10 7HX. Send messages of solidarity gmb@gmbbarkingb10.org.uk



Striking for services

## ENERGY WORKERS

## Power staff to ballot over attacks

**THE GMB** and Unite unions are balloting power maintenance workers employed by energy giant Scottish Power over attacks on working conditions.

The ballot affects some 1,200 workers who maintain power supplies in the North West, north Wales and Scotland.

They carry out repairs to disrupted power supplies from substations and at the roadside.

Bosses are trying to scrap flexible working hours under the rostered days off scheme, which they say would "free up" 5,500 additional working days in England and Wales.

The ballot ends on Thursday of this week.

## POSTAL DELIVERY WORKERS

## Private post bosses want to sack 2,000 workers

**PRIVATE** delivery company Whistl has issued redundancy notices to 2,000 workers after suspending its delivery service.

Whistl—previously known as TNT—offered end-to-end delivery of business post such as bills in London, Liverpool and Manchester.

It had planned to expand to Edinburgh, Glasgow and Birmingham.

But Lloyd's bank's private equity arm LDC refused to fund it because of "ongoing changes in UK postal market dynamics".

Whistl continues to operate a postal service—but will rely on Royal Mail to make the actual deliveries.

Merlin Reader is an area delivery rep in London for the postal union CWU. He

spoke to Socialist Worker in a personal capacity.

He said, "Obviously this shows the market doesn't work. The regulator Ofcom is going on about how inefficient Royal Mail are—but at least we're delivering the mail."

"If Whistl pulls out of the postal market completely that's a huge amount of work going back to Royal Mail."

He added, "Two thousand people losing their jobs is not a good thing. But it's an opportunity to improve their conditions by getting them into Royal Mail."

"The CWU needs to push Royal Mail to recruit those people into the business, where conditions and wages are better."

Nick Clark



# Bosses put safety at risk say porters

Dundee porters are on all-out strike—and are gaining confidence, reports Raymie Kiernan

**PORTERS AT Ninewells and Royal Victoria hospitals in Dundee have raised serious concerns about how bosses are dealing with their indefinite strike.**

Some 120 porters are in their sixth week of all-out strike.

The Unite union members are demanding bosses put them on the band 2 pay grade, the same as most other porters in Scotland's health service. They are currently on band 1.

NHS Tayside bosses are desperately trying to run a scabbing operation.

But strikers told Socialist Worker they think that management's "volunteers" are not subject to the same stringent health and safety procedures they undergo.

"You don't know what kind of waste you could be picking up," Jeff told Socialist Worker.

Lucas added, "It can be like Russian roulette picking up the clinical waste. You

## BACK STORY

**Porters at two Dundee hospitals are in their sixth week of indefinite strike**

● The workers want to be paid the same as most other Scottish porters are

● Bosses have brought in scabs to try and undermine the action

● Strikers say this puts the safety of both workers and patients at risk

● Porters are determined to keep fighting

don't know if there will be needles in there or not."

Sixteen of the strikers deal directly with clinical waste and are on band 2 already.

But they are solidly behind the strike and won't go back until everyone wins.

Jeff said the scabs were not aware they would need to have certain vaccinations to do their work.

They told strikers that

bosses had not mentioned it.

Strikers are also worried that those transporting clinical waste are not following correct procedures and could be spreading infection.

Pictures have emerged of overflowing bins with orange bags full of clinical waste (see box, below).

Others show linen trolleys "stinking of urine" sitting in corridors outside operating theatres and patient wards.

NHS Tayside human resources director George Doherty claimed the pictures are faked.

Kris said Doherty "is a clown".

He said, "If it wasn't for the porters the hospital would come to standstill."

Porters say background checks on the scabs, who deal with vulnerable patients, can't be getting done.

## Disclosure

Doherty said, "All our NHS Tayside volunteers have undergone Standard Disclosure." But strikers say this is not the normal procedure for certain roles.

The Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme is an enhanced background check for those who have regular contact with children and protected adults.

Many of the porters are PVG-checked.

"It's not just a couple of days or weeks to get these checks done," said Kris.

The porters feel stronger as the dispute has gone on.

Nigel told Socialist Worker, "We've grown in confidence."

"People are getting switched on and seeing what these bastards at the top are all about."

And strikers have made links with the all-out strike of Glasgow homelessness caseworkers. Nigel said, "You start to realise that your struggle is everybody's struggle."

Workers' names have been changed

## National Gallery protest



PCS UNION general secretary Mark Serwotka (second from left) joins workers and others to show solidarity with victimised union rep Candy Udwin

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

## Workers rally to back victimised rep

by NICK CLARK

SOME 50 National Gallery workers and supporters held a rally in solidarity with victimised PCS union rep Candy Udwin on Tuesday of this week.

The rally was held to support Candy on the first day of her disciplinary hearing, which was ongoing as Socialist Worker went to press.

PCS union members at the gallery are fighting plans to privatise 400 out of 600 jobs, as well as attacks on trade union rights.

Bosses suspended Candy on the eve of their first five-day strike in January. Candy told the rally,

"The people I would really like to thank the most are the people at the National Gallery."

"Your support and your solidarity is what keeps me going."

"We've done such a fantastic job in very difficult circumstances."

"The National Gallery thought that attacking our union in the way that they have was going to stop us from fighting—it didn't work."

PCS general secretary Mark Serwotka was also at the rally.

He said, "There can be no settlement to this strike without a just settlement for Candy, which means the charges are dropped and she is

allowed back at work."

"If Candy is sacked then we will take industrial action. And we will mean that action, until she is allowed back at work."

Serwotka also reiterated the PCS call for thousands of people to join a national demonstration against the privatisation.

The demonstration is set to take place in Trafalgar Square, central London, on 30 May.

Invite speakers to your union meetings at [ngnotforsale.wordpress.com](http://ngnotforsale.wordpress.com)  
Make donations to the strike fund to sort code 08/60/01 and account no 20169002  
Cheques to PCS Culture Media and Sport Association, c/o PCS North West Region, Jack Jones House, 1 Islington, Liverpool L3 8EG

## Keep up the pressure on the Scottish National Party

**THE PORTERS' dispute has put the Scottish National Party (SNP) in the spotlight.**

Health is a devolved power in Scotland and the SNP government could intervene.

Shona Robison is the Scottish health minister and the local MSP.

Kris said she "has done absolutely nothing" and added that new Dundee West MP Chris Law "wasn't interested".

SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon met strikers at the STUC conference last month. Nigel said, "It was like she didn't



Waste piles up as strike bites

want to know."

But pressure is growing—bosses were meeting the union as Socialist Worker went to press.